

60 YUMAN TRIBES OF THE GILA RIVER

423 own the land: we all owned it, so that a man could choose what land he pleased." Women also owned fields, that is, normally only widows who had no male members of their families to plant for them.

[53] Since floods were slow and mild on the Gila, a stream with low gradient and wide flood plains, there were no difficulties caused by a marauding stream necessitating relocation of the fields.

Boundaries came into dispute: such quarreling had its special name, *ɣamiltō'tā ak,e'vām*, "[boundaries] bristling side by side." This was one of the rare occasions when the dead were named, not in insult, but as warrant of ownership. "My father had his land over to there, but when you took it you pushed it [the boundary] over to here"; to which the other would reply, "No, my land extended farther to your side." Exasperating and [578] drawn-out quarrels arose over minute pieces of land. If they [627] finally reached the fighting stage, a third man was called on to decide. He might say, "Your land is good enough to that place, so give up this little piece for his benefit, so he will not have any more to say," or he would divide the disputed patch equally. [171] There were, however, no pushing contests or stick fights over disputed boundaries in the manner of the Mohave."

Cultivation in all its stages was man's work, but gathering the 462 harvest was woman's alone. At that time men were busy making ●[343] the store houses for pumpkins and watermelons. An old woman, with no men to help her, would, of course, plant for herself.

It is now difficult, with the old fields long done away with, to 423 discover what the ownership of field tracts may have been. But 428 it seems to have followed on this male occupation with cultivation that fields were, on the whole, regarded as the personal possessions of men. Inheritance was specifically said to be in the male line. Normally when a man died, the land was inherited by his immediate family: his widow, sons and daughters. Ultimately it came into the possession of the children. A daughter would get some one to plant for her. It may well be that daughters did not transmit their claim.

423 768 During the period of mourning, the survivors made no use of  
" Kroeber, *Handbook*, p. 744.

88 YUMAN TRIBES OF THE GILA RIVER

- 352 confined by any sort of built fireplace. Sleeping places were on  
[354] each side, marked by bundles of coarsely woven blankets of cot-  
513 ton to serve as mattress and covering. The parents of the house-  
hold slept together at one side, with their smaller children be-  
tween them to prevent them getting in the fire. Older children  
and other relatives slept on the opposite side. It was said that  
parents always slept on the north side, but in at least one house-  
hold described in detail, they occupied the opposite side. Guests  
[574] were placed in the best sleeping place, the rear of the house (the  
west side), so that they might have the fire between them and  
the doorway.<sup>6</sup> A big fire was built late in the afternoon to warm  
[354] up the house for the night. The beds were arranged so that they  
[721] always slept with their heads to the east. Men kept their bows  
and arrows at their heads on stormy nights for then the enemy  
could be expected. Men slept with their breechclouts on; women  
[291] took off their willow skirts and wore only the little under-aprons.

[522] They tell as a joke of a man who ran out at a false alarm of the enemy. His  
wife grabbed for her skirt in the dark, but caught hold of the fringe of his breech-  
clout by mistake, and tore it from him. He ran out naked with his bow.

342 The several parts of the interior were not named. Someone  
sent to find something in the house would be told he could locate  
it in "the middle" (vuto') or "east wall," "south wall," etc. The  
names of parts of the construction are not altogether peculiar to  
a house:

- [192] ava', house  
wülpo', post (wülpo' tükuru', middle post; wülpo' kwilpaal'a, side post, of a  
house having three rows of posts)  
wacwe'al, wall (of a house only); clivi'k, vertical wall pole; itcämi'ala, horizontal  
rib; tcaplu'm, thatch  
mai', "top, high," roof  
de'väm, dirt layer (but dirt is äma't)  
vaya', doorway; vaya'pik, entry (There is no specific name for the door-flap it-  
self)

• 343 Probably every house was provided with a flat-roofed shade  
(mat'k, iä'l'): every existing house has one. This was sometimes  
built against the front (east side) of the dwelling, where two  
posts supported the outer edge like a porch roof, but it was usu-

<sup>6</sup> For the arrangements of an actual family, see p. 226.

## HOUSES

89

ally at a little distance to the southeast. This resembled the central frame of the dwelling, was of the same height but perhaps greater area, and invariably was framed on nine posts, set three in a row. The roof was covered with arrowweeds but not dirt. Sometimes willow branches were placed vertically on the west side against the sunshine, but all the sides were never enclosed. This structure furnished shade in summer: it never served as a dwelling. 343

Beneath the shade stood several mesquite posts supporting large jars for the storage of water. These stood about thirty inches high and, like those of the Pima and Papago,<sup>1</sup> had three short branches to hold the jar. The mouths of these jars were usually unprotected but sometimes covered by Pima baskets. [415] [342] [171]

Travelling parties never built houses of any description, perhaps because they were never far from home and even then within the enemy's striking distance. Further, families ordinarily left home to gather mesquite, etc., only in the summer when shade, rather than any other protection, was needed. They camped under the overhanging boughs of big trees. The White Mountain Apache custom of enclosing the camp in a ring of brush to keep out flying sand was unknown. 484 342

Each dwelling was also provided with a single storehouse (va'na'aa). There was no conventional place for its location: it stood in front, rear, or at the side of the house indifferently. In form it was simply a gable-roof set over a pit. This pit was oval, six to eight feet long, and almost knee deep. A post was set up in the pit near each end, a ridge pole connecting the pair. Willow branches were stuck into the ground around the brink of the pit so that they would lean against the ridge. (They were not tied to it.) Other willows were lashed horizontally to these to form two ribs around sides and end, one above the other. Arrowweeds were then placed over the frame as carefully as the thatch of the dwelling. There were three rows of thatch; the first, stem end up, all around at the base; another, also stem up, at a higher level; the third row, stem end down, lapped over the ridge. No outer ribs were needed to hold this thatch in place, since the house was 343

<sup>1</sup>Russell, *Pima Indians*, p. 127; Dorney, *Indians of the Southwest*, p. 203.

90 YUMAN TRIBES OF THE GILA RIVER

- 343 so low (only three or four feet above the ground level at the ridge) that the dirt, now banked around it and spread over the whole, held it firmly. The ridge pole ran east and west; the tiny entrance, through which one could just creep, was in the eastern gable-end. Logs piled one on another closed the opening. A man working alone took a month to build such a storehouse, but [476] friends or relatives usually helped. They were fed by him but not otherwise paid. Melons, pumpkins, and similar foodstuffs were [251] stored in these houses.

177 Modern storage houses are like those described by Bartlett in 1852. These are  
343 small rectangular houses, the walls consisting of stakes set close together and provided with a dirt-covered roof. The space between the wall stakes usually allows free circulation of air, but Bartlett remarks, "They are wattled with straw and rushes, and are sometimes covered with a thick layer of mud."<sup>8</sup> This has become the modern residential type.

- 343 While basket granaries were quite unlike these structures in  
251 construction, they stood so invariably as part of the house group  
-285 that they should be described here. The granaries (sákwi'n) were huge nest-like affairs crudely coiled of bunches of arrowweed, one or more of which stood near every house. They were three to five feet in diameter, three to four feet high, depending, of course, on the amount of material to be stored. These were, strictly speaking, not baskets at all, since they lacked a bottom, but thick-walled, coiled cylinders. The process of their manufacture was [171] exactly that described by Kissell for the Pima.<sup>9</sup> Mrs. Redbird, who made a small granary for me as a model, used a base ring taken from an old granary, and wove counter-clockwise working on the outside of the near edge. They were woven by both men and women; those who did not know how, employed experts. These granaries lasted for years.

- 251 The granaries rested on a low platform or were half-buried:  
343 they were not placed on the roof as by the Pima. A crib-work was built to raise them off the ground a foot or more to keep the contents dry and away from rodents. This consisted of two short

<sup>8</sup> Bartlett, *Personal Narrative*, II, 234.

<sup>9</sup> Kissell, *Papago and Pima Basketry*, p. 178; see also Russell, *Pima Indians*, p. 144.

## HOUSES

91

logs with small sticks across, covered with a layer of arrowweed.<sup>25/</sup>  
The basket was set on this and in turn covered with a layer of<sup>343</sup>  
arrowweeds crossed by another laid at right angles. Arrowweed  
base and cover extended considerably beyond the edges of the  
basket. To protect them more adequately from foxes and go-  
phers, they were sometimes half-buried. A hole was dug, waist-  
deep and far larger than the basket. A deep layer of brush was  
rammed into this by treading it down, so as to cover the bottom  
and the sides in part. The basket was set in this. Willow  
branches were thrust into the periphery of the pit, brought over  
the top of the basket and covered thickly with dirt.

Huts that were practically identical with the storehouse were<sup>343</sup>  
built for a girl's puberty rite, for menstrual lodges and childbirth,  
and for warriors undergoing purification. They differed prima-  
rily in the absence of the pit; other differences were inconsequen-  
tial. These, like the storehouse, were called va'na'ra. The pu-  
berity hut was built with more slender willow poles, so tall that  
they lapped considerably over the ridge. Dirt was banked only  
halfway up the weed-covered sides. The menstrual-childbirth  
hut was described as circular in plan, the willows bent over to  
reach the ridge, and entirely (?) covered with dirt.

Each village had its meeting house standing in the middle of<sup>345</sup>  
the sprawling community. The decision to build one was made  
by an old man, a chief, who appealed to the younger men to  
work on it. All the men of the village participated. Several wom-  
en cooked for the workmen. The structure stood for four or five  
years without renewal. If the village moved, and it seems they  
were always slowly moving as dwellings were burned down and  
erected elsewhere, the meeting house was taken apart to be re-  
constructed in a new location.

The meeting house differed from the dwelling only in its great-  
er size. It was thirty to thirty-five feet in diameter, but no higher  
than the dwelling, and provided with the same small doorway to  
the east. Kutox described the central frame as having nine posts  
(three rows of three), both posts and rafters being stouter than in<sup>[115]</sup>  
the ordinary house. Other informants again disagreed and are  
undoubtedly right. According to them, there were six main

345 posts, in two rows north and south, with four auxiliary posts nearer the doorway (Fig. 6, *d*). Nine main posts would be used only if three additional were needed when they thought the original six were rotted. The whole was thatched and dirt covered like the dwelling. A meeting house was called mataluwe'vas (said to be from ama't, "dirt"; luwe'va, "meeting," but this is doubtful; compare the words for councillors, matas'nyük, "those who agree" and matawi'kük, "helpers").

[171] The meeting house was essentially a man's club house and sweat house like those of central California and the Pueblo estufa-kiva. Like the southern Californian forms, it was not a dance house. Its appearance here is significant, because as Kroeber has pointed out, this structure was lacking among the Colorado River tribes.<sup>10</sup>

● 343 The eastern sweat house was also in use; the true miniature sweat lodge, not an assembly house. (Whether the Halchidhoma also had them is unknown, but it is not likely.) This was hemispherical, three and a half feet high, just big enough for a single person, and covered with arrowweed (?) and mud. A fire was built inside as in the Californian sweat house of the assembly type; heated stones were not used, as in the western plateaus and the Plains.<sup>11</sup> When the fire had burned to coals, these were spread, and covered with dirt: one sat on this. Bathing followed [515] sweating. The little lodge was built near the dwelling of the owner; others, including women, used it without pay. Sweating [1757] was to rid one's self of illness, not for pleasure. The lodge was called matil,aci'l,^, "flesh roaster."

<sup>10</sup> Kroeber, *Handbook*, pp. 365, 310.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Spier, *Havasupai Ethnography*, p. 343.

## CHAPTER XI

### INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

#### BIRTH

171  
846 Birth was preceded and followed by restrictions on the activities of the parents that applied to both to about the same degree. This semi-couvade, as Kroeber styles it, was moderate and of the order that prevailed generally throughout the Southwest and California.

849 When in the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy, the expectant mother should not lie flat on her back else the embryo would lie crosswise or be born feet first. Neither she nor her husband should look at dead animals or birds, else the child would sicken like the animal, would be paralyzed for weeks. On the whole, it were better that the father did not hunt; if he did, he must not stare at what he killed. Nowadays, neither may look at a picture of any sort; the child will be deformed. Nor could either look at or touch rattlesnakes, else the child would be deformed and never walk: it would seem to lack bones; could not stand.

Food tabus applied to the mother from the sixth month. She must eat no more than she could help and must especially avoid fat. Should she eat fat, the embryo would be covered with it, especially its eyes, nose and mouth (a caul?). The mouth would be filled with fat, so that at its first breath, the child would choke. There was no objection to her eating salt, the common tabu elsewhere. Her husband could eat fat and salt at this time, but he joined her after the birth in eschewing them.

It was known that pregnancy has a duration of nine lunar months. It was, however, not usual to calculate the exact time at which the birth would occur, but some women knew they would give birth at a particular full moon, e.g. Births were rather uniformly distributed through the year.

844  
● 343 Birth took place in the menstrual shelter, or a similar structure

## INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

311

was built for the purpose near the house by the husband or other relatives. This consisted of a ridgepole supported on two posts, placed east and west, with willow branches thrust into the ground and bent over to it. The whole was covered with arrow-weeds and dirt. It was circular in ground-plan. The lodge had no special name, but like the storehouse was called vana'r<sup>a</sup>. A fire was built within to warm the ground and to heat water.

The expectant mother was helped by her mother and another feminine relative. They would choose a helper whose time of delivery had been brief. If the parturient could not endure the pain, four or five women were called in to assist until the little house was full. They did not sing. Should the case be exceptionally difficult, they thought her bewitched and called in a shaman who could cure this. Then her husband or other male relative would help. There were no internal medicines to accelerate delivery nor for an excessive flow following birth. Some women preferred to give birth unassisted.

A woman of middle age told me that she had borne her five children alone. Her husband, a widower with children of his own, protested that he did not know how to help, but she prevailed on him to heat water, etc., as needed. This was purely a matter of personal preference: she did not like to have the old women fussing over her. She was also aware of the desirability of continuing her domestic labor until the last moment.

It was recognized that births after the first were of shorter duration. In the old days, it was said, a good many women died in childbirth, whereas nowadays not many are lost; which argues for the absence of venereal disease today.

The parturient sat with her back against the western post, because in the tale of the woman who had twins (p. 368), she tried the four directions when her pains began. She said, "A woman who is to give birth should sit against the western post, facing east." A hole made in front of the parturient was filled with sand, which was hollowed a little and covered with a cotton cloth, rabbitskin blanket or other soft thing to receive the baby. She sat with her knees drawn up. A strong woman, standing behind, would put her arms around her, pressing downward and shifting her from side to side. From the time the birth pains began, the parturient was not allowed to drink.

343  
844

844

[754]

[165]

[712]

Maricopa

Kohuana

Mohave

Halchidoma

## 326 YUMAN TRIBES OF THE GILA RIVER

88/ ciently warm in the air. The hut itself was kept warm at all times. The crescentic stone of the southern California Indians used in such "baking" was unknown here.<sup>13</sup>

According to an elderly Maricopa woman, Josepha Juan, on the other hand, the running was confined to the second set of four days. When she ran to a distant point in the east and stopped, her companions clapped a hand over her mouth, so that she had to breathe through her nose. Then they ran back. A [535] dance was made on each of these four days. A line of girls faced a line of men, the menstruant taking her position at the middle of the line of girls. The lines moved backward and forward. The [533] song used was peculiar to the rite: both song and dance were called tatura'np. Last Star, an old Kaveltcadom-Maricopa, said this song was tatura'npig, a Maricopa song contrasting with the Kohuana tuma'np, sung at the scalp dance. Tatura'npig referred to purifying the girl, making her strong, industrious, dignified, kind, gentle, able to withstand thirst, run well, etc.<sup>14</sup>

It may well be that we are dealing with a tribal distinction here; the rite devoid of dance, like the Mohave,<sup>14</sup> being Halchidoma; with the dance, Maricopa.

[304] At the end of the eight-day period, the girl was tattooed.

841 The whole performance was repeated at subsequent menstruations until the girl married; four, five or six times. Should she not marry for several years the performance was nevertheless continued. Throughout the whole period she remained single, not only during the periodic illnesses, salt and meat continued tabu and the scratcher must be used.

● 343 The puberty hut was built expressly for the first rite at some distance from the dwelling. It was kept for later use as a menstrual shelter. This was much like the storage house, but the [881]

<sup>13</sup> Kroeber, *Handbook*, p. 865.

[171] <sup>14</sup> Kroeber (*ibid.*, pp. 786-87) records Diegueño Tu-tomunp as the equivalent of Mohave and Cocopa Tumanpa, with Tomunp as an alternative name. His Mohave informants identified it as their "Long Tumanpa," one of the forms of the Tumanpa song-series.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 748.

## INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

327

wall poles were not so heavy. Long thin willows were selected for these so that they might lap considerably over the ridge. Dirt was banked halfway up the sides, not all over, and the hut lacked the pit of the storage house. The structure was just large enough for a single person to lie.

Throughout their lives, women left their dwellings for these shelters during their monthly illnesses. Meat and salt were again tabu at this time, and the scratching stick, kept in the hut, must be used. They bathed each morning, but did not run to the east. There they worked at their basketry and the like; other women and girls, menstruants and otherwise, joining them in their activities and eating with them there.

A girl at first menstruation was called *matavi'r<sup>a</sup>* (meaningless?) or *macaxai' matavi'r<sup>a</sup>*; any menstruant *ha'kwinyavi'g*; the menstrual or puberty hut literally *ha'kwinyavi'n,ava'*, "menstruant's house"; the menstrual period and flow, *nihwitk*, "red," or by a euphemism *xakn,ivi'k*, "living away."

## MANNERISMS, CUSTOMARY BEHAVIOR, AND SAYINGS

Like all Indians, these people can sit endlessly saying nothing and looking fixedly into space. It made no difference whether a stranger like myself was present or not. On the other hand, they can become excessively talkative and are at all times ready to joke and laugh. If there is any one noticeable feature, it is their constant spontaneous humor. I observed this before I became aware that Kroeber had recorded exactly the same characteristic of the Mohave.<sup>15</sup> Mr. E. W. Gifford tells me that the Cocopa impressed him as more humorously inclined than the central Californian tribes with whom he is familiar. It may be that this is a lower Colorado Yuman trait.

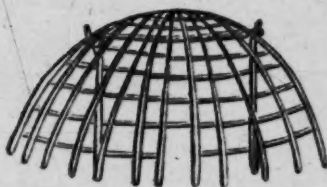
A humorous incident will illustrate. A group of women once went to gather berries. A man, who had gone hunting early, was returning still early in the day when he met them. Spying a big hole in the ground, he used two knuckles to imitate deer tracks leading to it. He called to them to come look at it. He asked, "You see those tracks? What do you think it is?" They said it looked like deer tracks. He said, "If you are sure, you had better sit around and watch that hole. I will run home to get something to dig with. Your baskets are just the thing to

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 731.

234

THE COCO-MARICOPA AND  
The Pimo Indians

P  
RY  
342 sun; some are then plastered over with mud. An opening for a door is left, about three feet high, to creep in at. These habitations vary in height from five to seven feet; so that in many of them one cannot stand erect. In fact they are chiefly used to sit and sleep in. In diameter they are from fifteen to twenty-five feet. In the most westerly village of the Coco-Maricopas, from which the annexed sketch was taken, the wigwams are wholly plastered with mud. Their cooking is done out of doors, where the greater portion of their time is passed, beneath a kind of shed or bower attached to the wigwams. This is open on all sides, and merely protected from the sun overhead. Beneath these bowers the people are generally seen engaged in their household occupations, only resorting to their better protected abodes in cool or rainy weather. The accompanying sketch shows the manner of erecting these wigwams.



Mode of constructing Wigwams.

P  
RY  
343 Besides the dwelling-places, each family is provided with a store-house or granary. These are built like the Mexican *jakals*, i. e., with stakes placed close together and about eight or nine feet high. They are better structures than the dwellings, and are probably made more open, in order to give a free circulation of

The COCO-MARICOPA  
AND THE PIMO INDIANS.

235

air through the grain deposited in them. They are  
wattled with straw and rushes, and are sometimes  
coated with a thick layer of mud. As this becomes  
dry, additional layers of mud are added, which render

P  
RY ●  
343 ●



Coco-Maricopa Village.

P  
RY  
[361  
231]

them impervious to water. The wheat and shelled  
corn (maize) are put into large vases or baskets, from  
three to five feet high, made out of ropes of wheaten  
straw. These ropes, which are as thick as one's arm,  
are coiled around into graceful forms, and sewed  
together like some kinds of basket work. The vases

P  
RY  
[415]

236

THE COCO-MARICOPA AND  
The Pimo Indians

- P  
● RY so formed contain ten or twelve, and some even fifteen  
● 343 bushels of grain. The following sketch exhibits a view  
of the interior of a Pimo granary or store-house.



Pimo store-house.

P  
RY  
[251] On the tops of their wigwams and granaries may  
often be seen large piles of mezquit beans in the pod,  
which are placed there to dry, preparatory to being  
ground into flour for pinole.

P  
RY  
482 Both the tribes of Indians referred to, use a singular  
piece of frame-work made of three poles connected  
with a netting, which is carried on their backs. These  
are used both by women and men for gathering mez-  
quit beans, corn, and other light articles. They may be  
seen at every wigwam, and answer the purpose of a  
wheelbarrow. They are highly prized by their owners,  
as they are very useful to them, and are made with  
much labor. For the only specimen I could obtain, I  
was obliged to give goods to the value of ten dollars.

JO

These people possess horses and cattle, though but